

support and who do not qualify for cash aid from any other program. In-kind aid consists of paid housing, utilities, food, medical, etc. Each county sets its own grant amount and eligibility criteria consistent with State law. Only the cash aid portion of GA is currently intended to be included in the EBT system.

Counties may use the same eligibility system that is used for CalWORKs, or may maintain GA eligibility information on a separate database.

For all counties, except Sacramento and Los Angeles, issuance of GA/GR benefits is via a paper-based warrant issuance. Warrants are either mailed by the CWD or retrieved by the recipient.

Sacramento County currently operates an EBT system for the issuance of GA benefits. Recipients use a multi-purpose "Link to Services" card to obtain their cash benefits at participating automated teller machines (ATM) and retailers displaying the Quest service mark.

Los Angeles County uses an on-line issuance system called GOLD for GA issuance.

Refer to Appendix D for GA/GR caseload information.

3.6.a Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)

CAPI is a one hundred (100) percent state-funded program designed to provide monthly cash benefits to aged, blind, and disabled immigrants who are ineligible for Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) solely due to their immigrant status. CAPI is administered by the counties, or a consortium of counties, and supervised by the state. Except for the immigration requirements, the eligibility rules mirror those of SSI/SSP. There are two CAPI Consortia: the Bay Area Consortium and the Northern California/Orange County consortium, headed by San Mateo and Sacramento counties respectively.

Eleven counties have opted to have CDSS issue CAPI payments on their behalf, nine counties issue their own payments, and the rest of the counties belong to one of the two consortia, both of which issue their own payments. Los Angeles initially only delivered CAPI benefits electronically through a method that required recipients to go to a designated check-cashing outlet to receive their money. Los Angeles is reportedly now allowing recipients to receive paper warrants. We believe the rest of the counties and consortia issue paper warrants. CAPI recipients may also receive Medi-Cal and Food Stamps.

As of July 1999, there were 8,130 recipients statewide, and the caseload was growing. Beginning October 1, 1999, a new group of immigrants became potentially eligible for CAPI for a time-limited period that ends September 30, 2000. Numbers for this new group are not yet available.

3.7 Direct Deposit

Currently there are a few counties with operational direct deposit systems for issuance of cash benefits. Some additional counties are currently exploring the feasibility of direct deposit. CDSS intends to conduct a campaign to increase the number of counties offering direct deposit

to CalWORKs recipients. CDSS will be working with banks to encourage them to offer low-cost accounts to recipients, and will be working with counties to increase the acceptance of direct deposit among recipients. Counties will be allowed to continue their direct deposit programs in parallel with a cash EBT system. Direct deposit will always be a county option, and a recipient option if a county offers direct deposit.

3.8 Fresno County Benefit Cycling

Fresno County determines eligibility and benefit payment periods for all benefit programs using cycle payments, which is a different methodology than the rest of the counties. Since Fresno County's method of cycle payments, described below, results in de facto staggering of benefits, Fresno will not be required to change this methodology for the EBT environment. Furthermore, recent welfare reform legislation made cycle payments an option for all counties. Thus, there is the possibility that other counties may adopt this methodology during the life of the contract.

Cycle logic is based on the rules for eligibility determination and benefit calculation that speak to the time period of a "month." Historically, no distinction has been drawn between a calendar month and a fiscal month. Assigning fiscal months within and across calendar month(s) provides an alternative to the standard practice of "everything-once-per-month-for-everybody" and enables counties to maximize their utilization of time, staff and computer resources.

This requirement means that any county must be able to construct all service delivery structures so that: the entire client population is served within a calendar month; **but** the population is divided into equal segments; **and** each segment of the population has a designated fiscal cycle